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ABSTRACT

The goals of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act Title I program operated by the Public Schools of the District of Columbia during 1978-79 were to provide disadvantaged children with supplemental instructional services to improve their reading and mathematics performance and to support their affective and psychomotor development. This report provides a summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations presented in three in-depth reports on each program component. Included are summaries describing the impact of Title I program participation on student achievement in reading and mathematics, the impact of Title I students' background and behavior on educational and affective development, and the evaluation of the program's instructional process and support components. (Author/MK)

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ED197003

EVALUATION OF THE ESEA TITLE I PROGRAM
OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Executive Summary

1978-79

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Becky Jon Hayward, Ph.D.

May 1980

PREFACE

Evaluation of the 1978-79 ESEA Title I Program operated in the District of Columbia Public Schools has been reported in a series of documents. One of these is the current document, Executive Summary. Other reports which describe Title I Program evaluation findings include the following:

- Final Model A Report: Evaluation of Program Impact on Reading and Mathematics;
- The Impact of Title I Students' Background and Behavior on Educational and Affective Development; and
- Evaluation of the Title I Instructional Process and Support Components.

Copies of these reports are available from the Division of Research and Evaluation, District of Columbia Public Schools.

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INTRODUCTION

Results from the comprehensive evaluation of the District of Columbia Public Schools' 1978-79 Title I Program have been reported in detail in a series of documents. This document provides a summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations presented in each of those documents. Included are summaries describing the impact of Title I program participation on student achievement in reading and mathematics, the impact of Title I students' background and behavior on educational and affective development, and the evaluation of the Title I Program's instructional process and support components.

The Impact of Title I Program Participation on Student Achievement in Reading and Mathematics

Students selected for participation in the Title I program in the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) receive supplementary instructional services in basic skills, particularly in reading and mathematics, through three major interventions:

- the laboratory program, in which students receive reading or mathematics instruction in a laboratory setting;
- the tutorial program, in which some students receive additional instruction in reading or mathematics provided by tutors in a before or after school setting; and
- the classroom program, in which students receive specialized classroom instruction based on the Title I Curriculum Handbook for no less than 90 minutes per week.

For purposes of evaluating the effectiveness of these services in improving the academic performance of program participants,[1] the norm-referenced model generally referred to as Model A is used.[2] In the evaluation of the DCPS program,

---

[1] Students receiving laboratory services, which is the primary intervention strategy of the DCPS Title I program, comprise the population included in the analysis of program impact on achievement.

[2] This model for determining the extent to which program participation results in improved academic performance is one of the several treatment effect models developed by the U.S. Office of Education to facilitate improvement in the evaluation of Title I programs throughout the nation. A comprehensive description of Model A and other designs available for evaluation of Title I programs is presented in Tallmadge, G., and Wood, C., User's Guide: ESEA Title I evaluation and reporting system. Mountain View, Ca.: RMC Research Corporation, October 1976. See also Hayward, B., Final Model A Report: Evaluation of Program Impact on Reading and Mathematics Achievement, 1978-79. Durham, N.C.: NTS Research Corporation, May 1979.

treatment effect is estimated through comparison of pre and posttest scores on the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills (CTBS), administered in fall and spring testing cycles to students from grades one, two, three, and seven who received Title I supplementary instructional services during the 1978-79 academic year. Additionally, fourth grade students participating in a pilot program in reading, were included in the analysis.

This section of the evaluation summary presents the results of the Model A analysis of the D.C. Title I program for 1978-79. Additionally, results of a separate analysis of students in grades one, two, and three distributed according to whether or not they were repeaters are presented.

The rationale for the repeaters/nonrepeaters analysis is as follows. For the most part students in Washington, D.C., who have repeated a grade are selected for the Title I program participation regardless of their qualification on such other variables as achievement. It was hypothesized that since repeaters exhibit differing pre-entering behavior from nonrepeating students, their selection on the basis of having repeated might well introduce a bias into the analysis of program-related achievement. That is, the possibility exists that the lower achievement levels of repeaters might cause a lower overall reported achievement level of program participants than might be found if repeaters were separated out for analysis.

Results of both analyses are presented in this section with a discussion of the implications and recommendations derived from this phase of the evaluation included.

Reading Achievement of Title I Students

Table 1 presents the estimated program treatment effects in reading for Title I participants. The mean gain in reading achievement for first grade students (n=1,277) was 1.66 NCEs; for second graders (n=1,162), 9.68 NCEs; for

Table 1

Estimated Treatment Effect (in NCEs) on Reading Achievement Among Students Receiving Title I Services (1978-79)[a]

Grade	n	Average pretest (NCE)	(%ile)	Average posttest (NCE)	(%ile)	Estimated treatment effect (NCE)	T	p
1	1277	41.64	35.2	43.30	37.0	1.66	3.10	<.002
2	1162	27.46	13.7	37.14	26.8	9.68	21.61	<.0001
3	1091	32.43	19.6	35.51	25.3	3.08	7.39	<.0001
4	123	28.22	14.8	36.06	25.3	7.84	5.56	<.0001
7	172	30.80	18.4	30.17	17.1	-0.63	- 0.76	<.45

[a]Tables showing NCE conversions are presented in the Final Model A Report.

third graders (n=1,091), 3.08 NCEs; for fourth graders (n=123), 7.84 NCEs; and for seventh graders (n=172), -.63 NCEs. Thus the largest average gains in reading were achieved by Title I students in second and fourth grades.

Data reported in Table 2 provide the post-treatment achievement gains in reading separately for repeaters and nonrepeaters in grades one, two, and three. For all grades, the inclusion of repeaters in the population analyzed was observed to have a depressing effect on total group achievement gains in reading (shown in Table I). For first grade, the total group gain was 1.66 NCEs, while the nonrepeater group gained 3.71 NCEs and repeaters' achievement was -3.99 NCEs. A similar pattern was observed for second and third-grade students; for both grades the total group gain was lower than the nonrepeater gains (9.68 versus 10.95 among second graders and 3.08 versus 3.56 among third graders).

Mathematics Achievement of Title I Students

Table 3 presents the estimated program effect of Title I supplementary instructional services in mathematics for Title I students who received services during the 1978-79 school year. The mean gain for 974 first grade students in

Table 2

Estimated Treatment Effect (in NCEs) on Reading for First, Second, and Third Grade Repeaters and Nonrepeaters Receiving Title I Services (1978-79)

Grade	n	Average pretest (NCE)	(%ile)	Average posttest (NCE)	(%ile)	Estimated treatment effect (NCE)	T	p
First								
Repeaters	331	41.19	33.5	37.21	26.8	- 3.99	- 4.28	<.0001
Nonrepeaters	924	41.94	35.2	45.66	42.5	3.71	5.83	<.0001
Second								
Repeaters	210	26.39	12.7	31.64	19.6	5.25	4.90	<.0001
Nonrepeaters	878	27.86	14.8	38.81	30.1	10.95	21.68	<.0001
Third								
Repeaters	126	30.20	17.1	30.27	17.1	0.07	0.06	<.96
Nonrepeaters	923	32.77	21.0	36.33	25.3	3.56	7.97	<.0001

Table 3

Estimated Treatment Effect (in NCEs) on Mathematics Achievement Among Students Receiving Title I Services (1978-79)

Grade	n	Average pretest (NCE)	(%ile)	Average posttest (NCE)	(%ile)	Estimated treatment effect (NCE)	T	p
1	974	42.82	37.0	50.01	50.0	7.19	11.02	<.0001
2	943	34.61	23.8	45.95	42.5	11.34	20.58	<.0001
3	720	29.32	15.9	40.13	31.7	10.81	22.62	<.0001
7	97	29.92	17.1	32.28	19.6	2.35	2.10	<.04

mathematics, 7.19 NCEs; for 943 second graders, 11.34 NCEs; for 720 third graders, 10.81 NCEs; and for 97 seventh graders, 2.35 NCEs. With the exception of the seventh grade, for which the number of students available for analysis was very low; gains in mathematics achievement among Title I students were consistently very large. Figures 1-5 provide a graphic representation of reading and mathematics gains for Title I students who received supplementary instructional services during the 1978-79 school year.

Table 4 presents the post-treatment achievement gains in mathematics separately for Title I repeaters and nonrepeaters in grades one, two, and three. For all grades, inclusion of the repeater group in the groups analyzed was observed to have a depressing effect on the total group achievement gain in mathematics (presented in Table 3). For grade one, repeaters gained .77 NCEs, while nonrepeaters gained 9.44 NCEs and the total group gained 7.19 NCEs. For grade two, repeaters gained 5.81 NCEs, nonrepeaters gained 12.70 NCEs, and the total group gained 11.34 NCEs. For grade three, gains were 8.71 NCEs for repeaters, 11.18 for nonrepeaters, and 10.81 NCEs for the group as a whole.

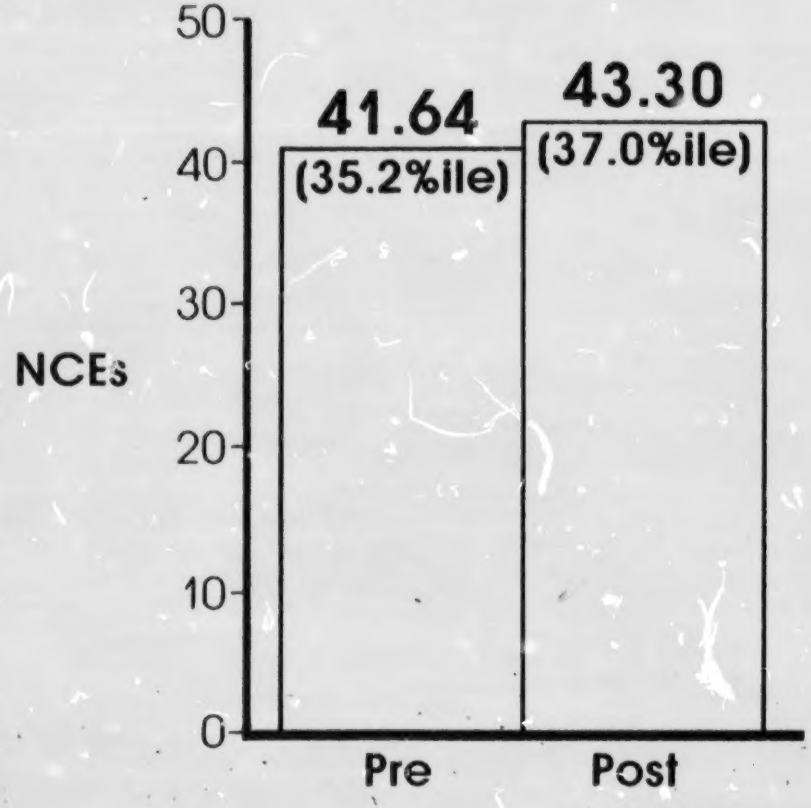
Table 4

Estimated Treatment Effect (in NCEs) on Mathematics Achievement for First, Second, and Third Grade Repeaters and Nonrepeaters Receiving Title I Services (1978-79)

Grade	n	Average pretest (NCE)	(%ile)	Average posttest (NCE)	(%ile)	Estimated treatment effect (NCE)	T	p
First								
Repeaters	237	44.27	38.8	45.04	40.6	0.77	0.67	< .50
Nonrepeaters	719	42.56	37.0	52.0	53.8	9.44	12.69	< .0001
Second								
Repeaters	174	33.55	22.4	39.36	30.1	5.81	4.90	< .0001
Nonrepeaters	706	35.12	23.8	47.81	46.2	12.70	20.12	< .0001
Third								
Repeaters	91	30.83	18.4	39.54	31.7	8.71	6.97	< .0001
Nonrepeaters	606	29.13	15.9	40.32	31.7	11.18	21.28	< .0001

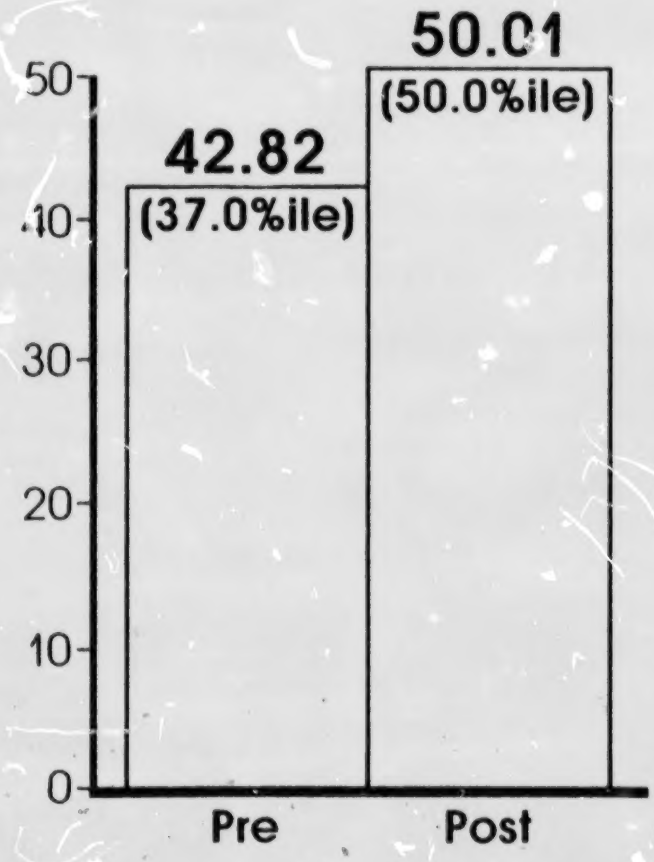
Figure 1

Achievement Gains Among Title I First Graders — 1978-79



Reading

Gain in NCEs: 1.66
Number of Students: 1277

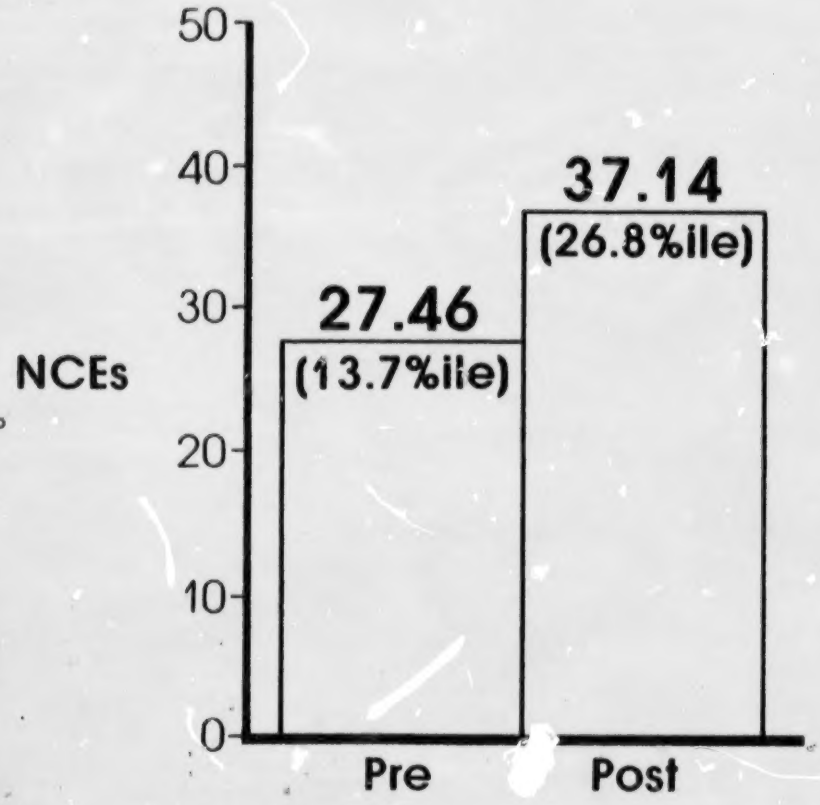


Math

Gain in NCEs: 7.19
Number of Students: 974

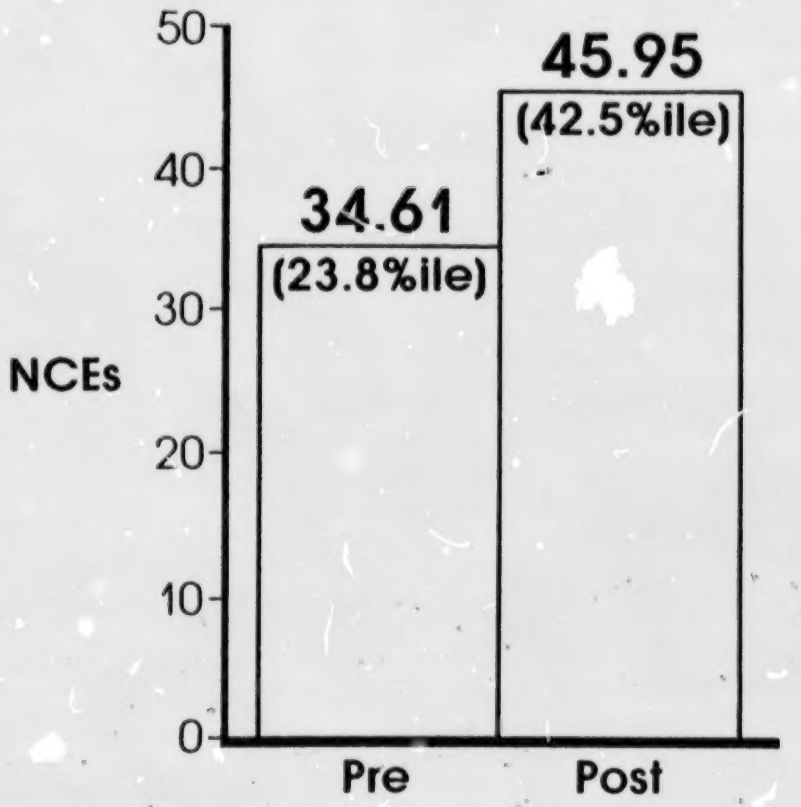
Figure 2

Achievement Gains Among Title I Second Graders — 1978-79



Reading

Gain in NCEs:	9.68
Number of Students:	1162

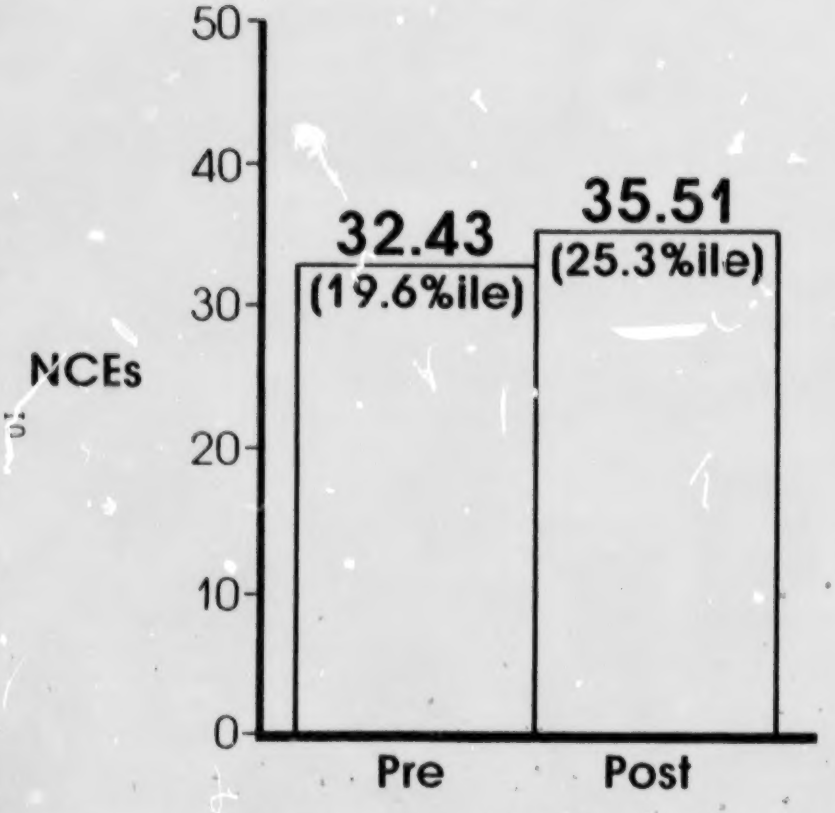


Math

Gain in NCEs:	11.34
Number of Students:	943

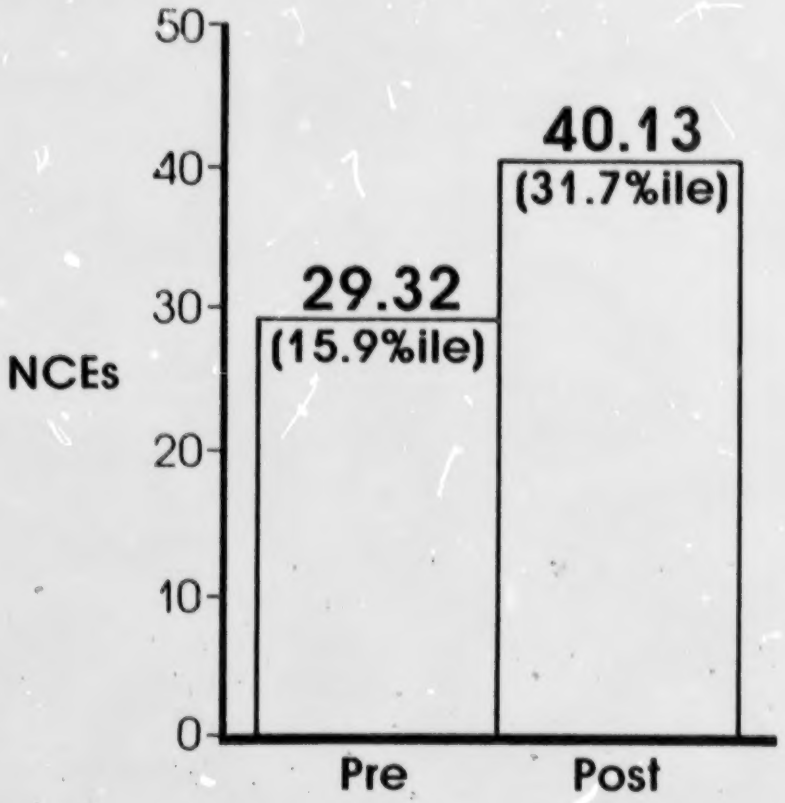
Figure 3

Achievement Gains Among Title I Third Graders — 1978-79



Reading

Gain in NCEs:	3.08
Number of Students:	1091

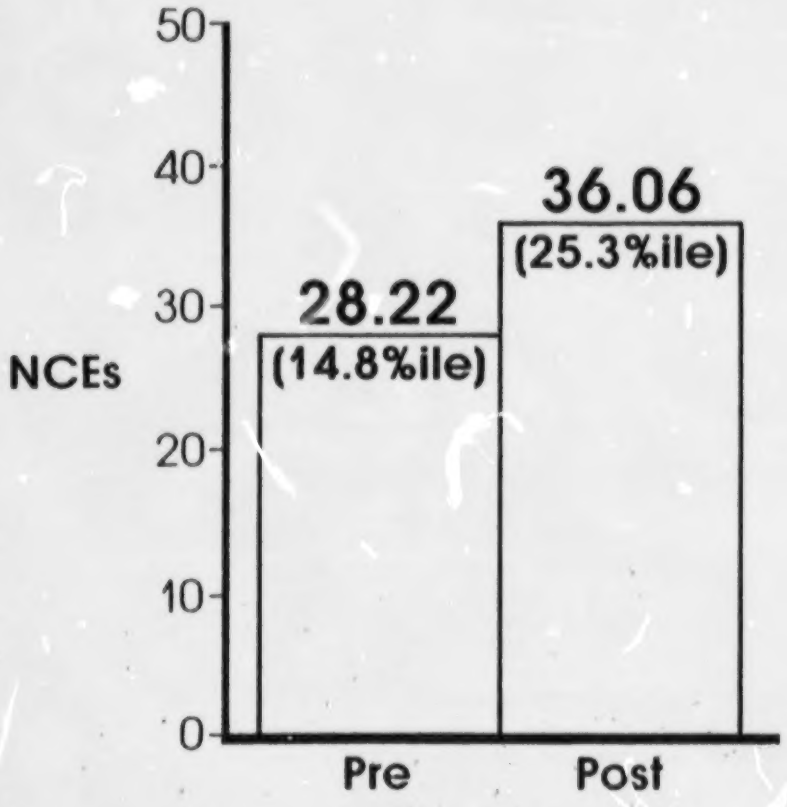


Math

Gain in NCEs:	10.81
Number of Students:	720

Figure 4

Achievement Gains Among Title I Fourth Graders — 1978-79

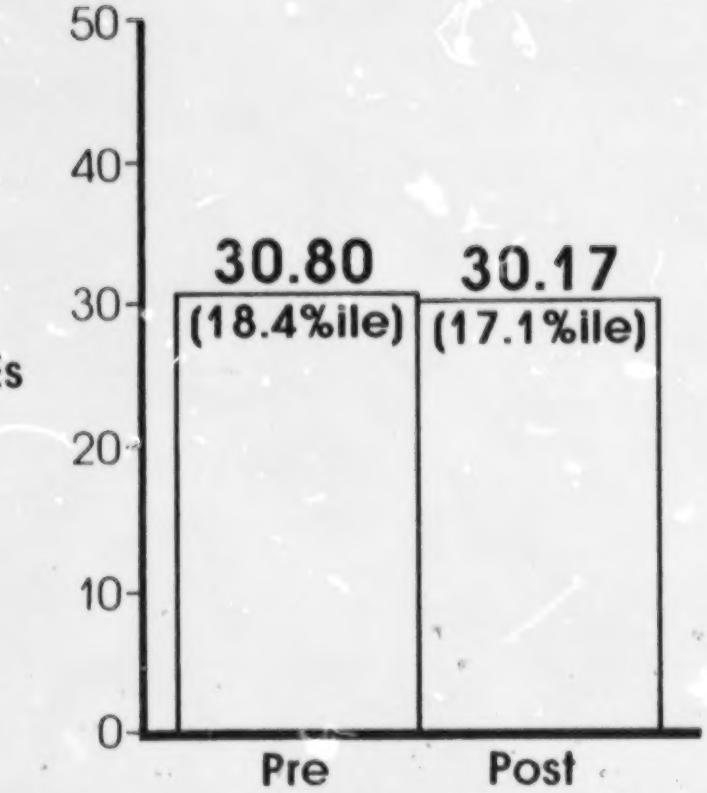


Reading

Gain in NCEs:	7.84
Number of Students:	123

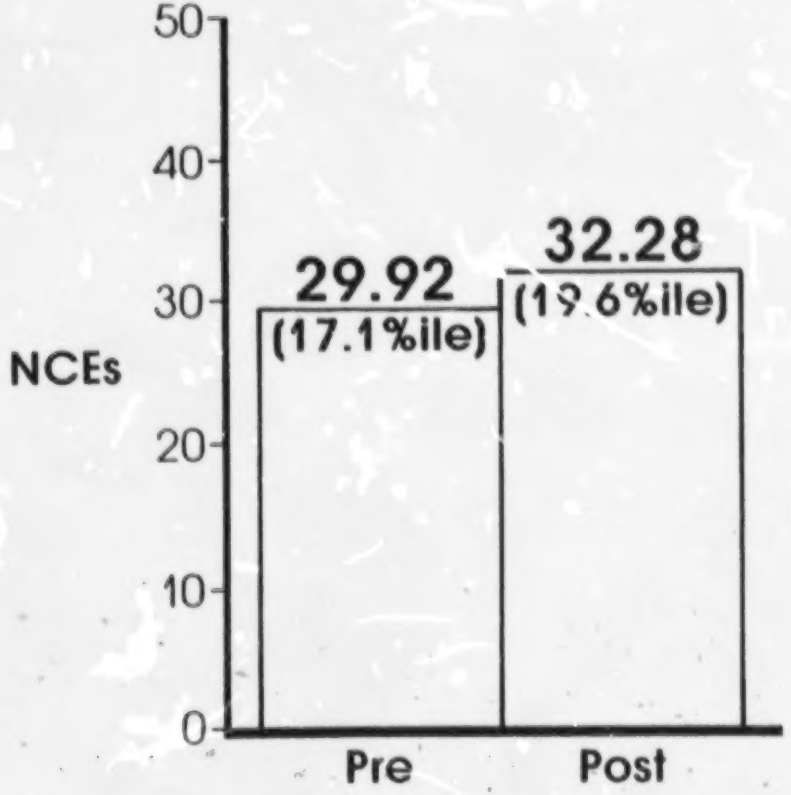
Figure 5

Achievement Gains Among Title I Seventh Graders — 1978-79



Reading

Gain in NCEs:	0.63
Number of Students:	172



Math

Gain in NCEs:	2.35
Number of Students:	97

$$\begin{array}{r} 2 \\ +3 \\ \hline 5 \end{array}$$

Comparison of Program Effects for 1977-78 and 1978-79

In order to examine the relative progress of the Title I program in improving the academic achievement among program participants, a comparison was made between the 1978-79 achievement gains and those reported for the 1977-78 Title I program. Achievement gains for reading are presented in Table 5 and Figure 6. As shown, student reading achievement gains in 1978-79 exceeded those reported for 1977-78 with the exception of grade seven.[3] Reading gains for 1978-79 were generally about one NCE higher than those reported in 1977-78. As indicated previously, the small number of students in the seventh grade sample severely limits the confidence with which results for that grade can be viewed.

Table 5

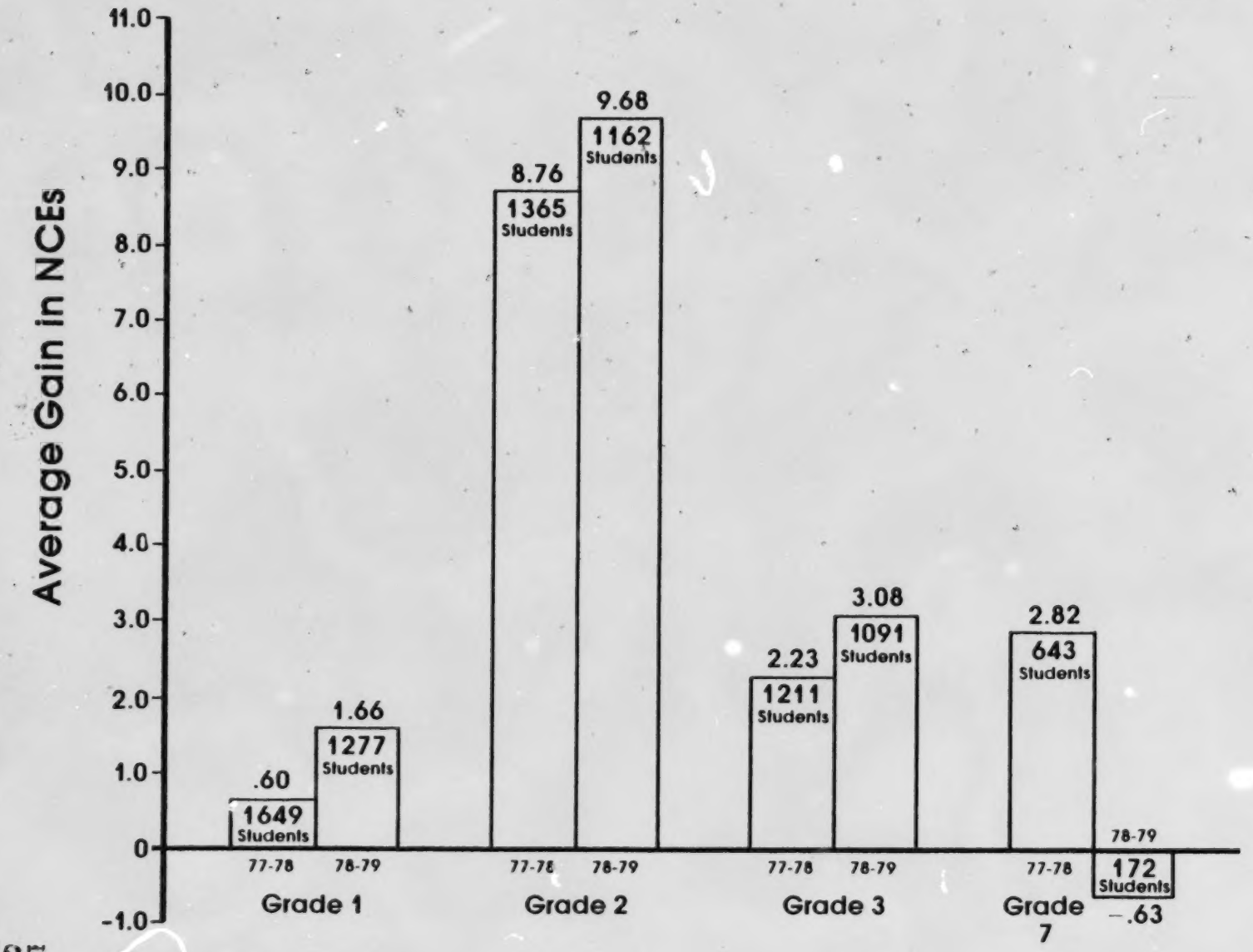
Title I Program Impact on Reading Achievement: Comparison of Estimated Treatment Effect (in NCEs) Among Students Receiving Title I Services in 1977-78 and 1978-79

	(1978-79)		(1977-78)	
Grade	n	Mean gain (NCE)	n	Mean gain (NCE)
1	1277	1.66	1649	.60
2	1162	9.68	1365	8.76
3	1091	3.08	1211	2.23
4	123	7.84	---	---
7	172	-.63	643	2.82

[3] Since the fourth grade program was implemented in 1978-79, no data were available for the previous year.

Figure 6

Title I Program Impact on Reading Achievement (1977-78 and 1978-79)



In mathematics, gains were higher in 1978-79 for students in grades one, two, and three (Table 6 and Figure 7). For first graders, the mean gain was about one NCE higher than in 1977-78. For second graders, the 1978-79 gain exceeded that of 1977-78 by almost three NCEs, and for third graders the gain was almost two NCEs higher. As with reading, the small number of students in the seventh grade sample limits the utility of comparisons for that grade.

For grades with adequate data (grade one, two, and three), therefore, achievement gains in 1978-79 were consistently higher than those reported for 1977-78. Further, gains in mathematics achievement were found to be relatively higher than those observed for reading.

Table 6

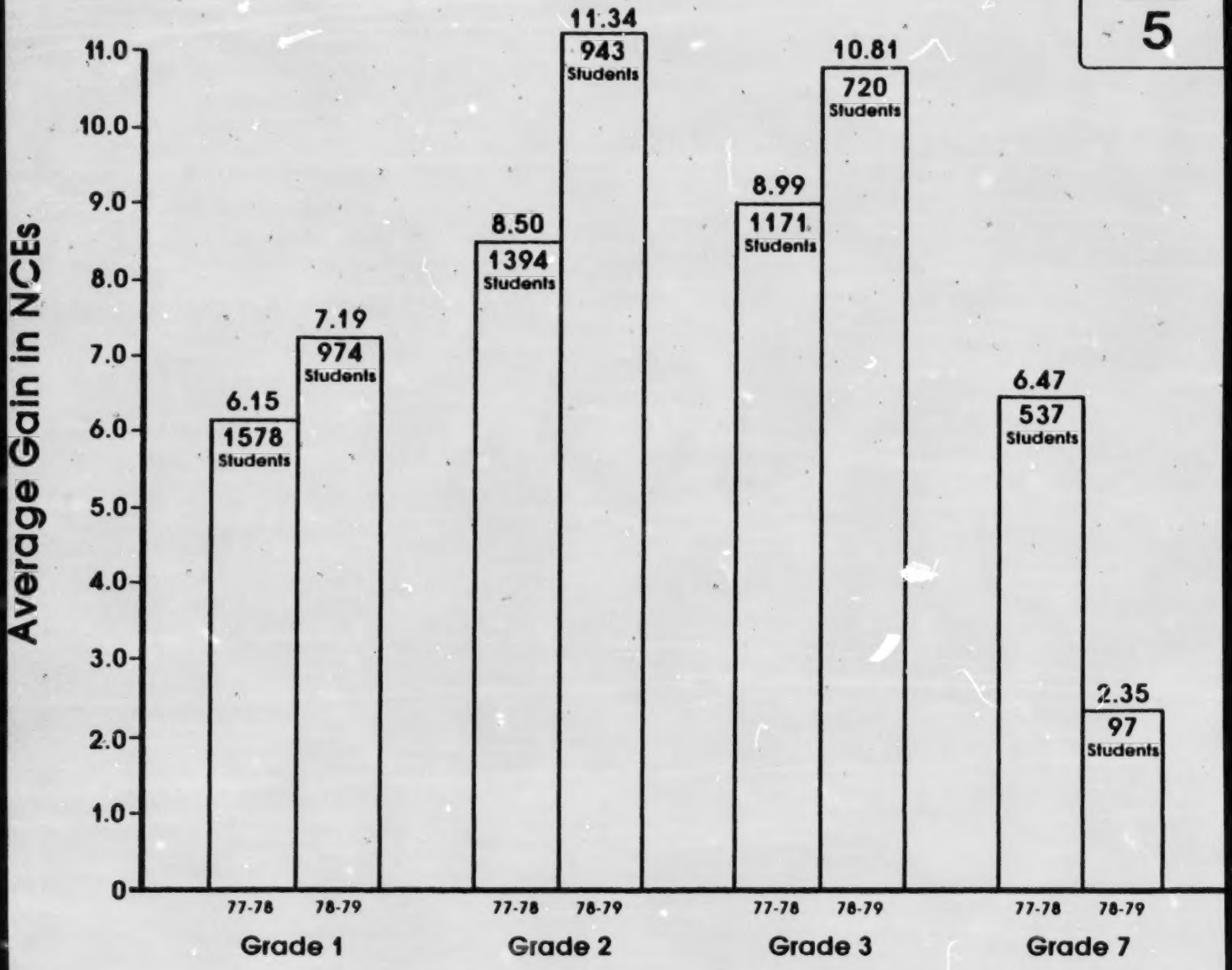
Title I Program Impact on Mathematics Achievement: Comparison of Estimated Treatment Effect (in NCEs) Among Students Receiving Title I Services in 1977-78 and 1978-79

	(1978-79)		(1977-78)	
Grade	n	Mean gain (NCE)	n	Main gain (NCE)
1	974	7.19	1578	6.15
2	943	11.34	1294	8.50
3	720	10.81	1171	8.99
7	97	2.35	573	6.47

Figure 7

Title I Program Impact on Mathematics Achievement (1977-78 and 1978-79)

2
+3
5



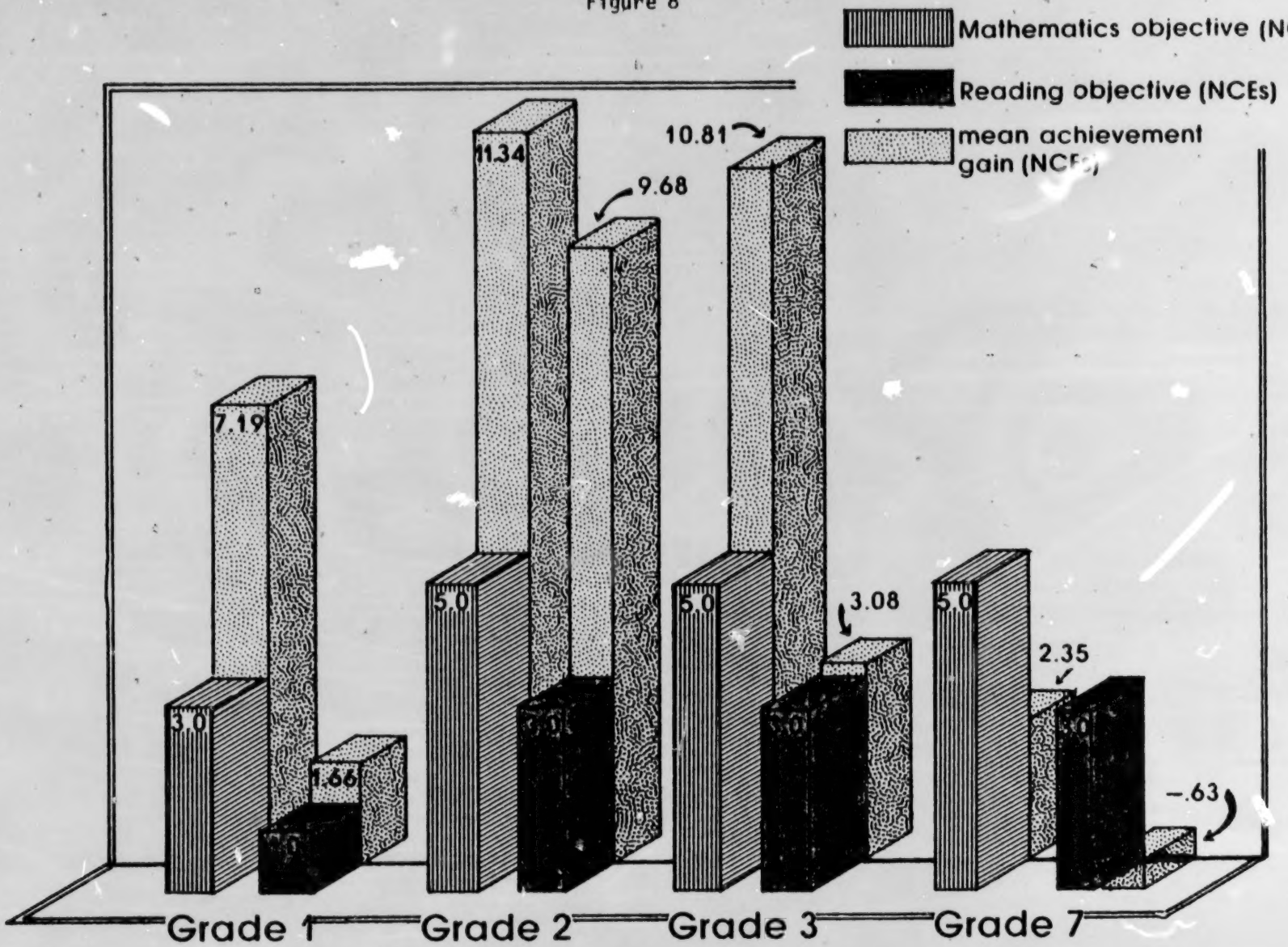
Conclusions and Implications

Program effectiveness. As has typically been the case with most Title I programs, the D.C. Title I program has traditionally presented program objectives relevant to reading and mathematics achievement in terms of grade equivalents. However, since the implementation of new Title I reporting and evaluation requirements by the Office of Education (the publication of final regulations occurred in October 1979), the use of grade equivalents to measure program effectiveness has become obsolete. The Office of Education now requires that program achievement gains be reported in a new metric, called normal curve equivalents (NCEs).

In response to this change, the D.C. Title I program has restated its achievement-related objectives in terms of NCEs. While this change will not be implemented until the 1979-80 school year, it seems reasonable to examine the effectiveness of the 1978-79 program in terms of the new objectives, particularly because this year's evaluation findings have been reported in NCEs. Table 7 and Figure 8 summarize the 1978-79 reading and mathematics achievement gains by grade and compare these gains with program objectives. As these data indicate, student achievement in reading and mathematics exceeded program objectives at all grade levels except grade seven. Student achievement gains, as measured against program objectives, were particularly high for grades two and four reading and for grades one, two and three mathematics. The conclusion can be reached, therefore, that for all elementary grades the 1978-79 Title I program met, and in the previously mentioned instances substantially exceeded, program objectives for student achievement in reading and mathematics.

The only areas in which program objectives were not achieved were seventh grade reading and mathematics. As indicated in the previous chapter, a partial

Figure 8



Comparison of 1978-79 Title I
Achievement Gains with 1979-80 Program Objectives

Table 7

1978-79 Title I Reading and Mathematics Achievement Gains in NCEs Compared with 1979-80 Program Objectives by Grade

Subject area by grade	1979-80 program objective (NCEs)	1978-79 mean achievement gain (NCEs)
Reading		
Grade 1	1	1.66
2	3	9.68
3	3	3.08
4	-[a]	7.84
7	3	-.63
Mathematics		
Grade 1	3	7.19
2	5	11.34
3	5	10.81
7	5	2.35

[a]Program objectives were not articulated for the fourth grade pilot project.

explanation for this finding may be the small number of cases available for analysis. Because of inherent differences between elementary and secondary school settings and instructional arrangements, difficulty has always been experienced in collecting data of adequate quality to evaluate the seventh grade program. In order to assure the accuracy of seventh grade evaluation findings in the future, additional effort should be expended on data collection at the junior high school level.

Even within the constraints of data quality, however, the relatively low treatment effects reported for seventh grade students suggest the possibility that programmatic action may be in order. Such action might take the form of additional resources or possibly the concentration of resources at the late

elementary grades where student movement (from class to class) is still better controlled than it can be in junior high school. Any such decisions are of course properly the province of Title I program decisionmakers.

Data collection and processing. As has occurred in previous years, a number of data-related problems arose during the evaluation which influenced the numbers of students who could be included in the Model A analysis. In order to fulfill the Model A assumptions, these problems need resolution. Since one problem had to do with student identification numbers, one approach may be to implement a control system to assure that all identification numbers match pre and post as well as to assure that the maximum number of matched records exists.

A second approach to this problem may be to re-examine and refine test and questionnaire distribution and receipt procedures. Part of this effort might be the provision of additional training and orientation at all levels included in the data collection process (classroom, school, region, and central receipt agency). These efforts may be expected to make a substantial contribution to assuring that the number of students available for analysis in the future is adequate to meet U.S.O.E. guidelines.

The Impact of Title I Students' Background and Behavior on Educational and Affective Development

Summary of Findings

Among the areas examined in the evaluation of the 1978-79 Title I program were questions concerning the extent to which environmental and demographic factors affect Title I students' educational development and the extent to which Title I students' affective development, as perceived by teachers, may have impact on their educational achievement. To examine these questions data were collected from teachers of Title I students on a Student Information Form designed for this evaluation; from the group-administered Self-Observation Scales, which assesses student self-concept; and from the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills administered to Title I students in Spring 1978.

Among the major findings derived from this phase of the evaluation are the following:

- Almost 90 percent of Title I identified students for whom data were available received supplementary instructional services in the laboratory. Most students attended the lab between two and one-half and five hours per week throughout the school year.
- Nearly one-fourth of Title I students also participated in the tutorial component of the program, with seventh graders receiving tutorial services for the longest period of time during the school year.
- Among the social and demographic factors considered by teachers as seriously interfering with the educational progress of some Title I students were economic need (13 percent), aggressive behavior (20 percent), and absenteeism (particularly among seventh graders).
- While relatively few Title I students experienced serious physical or health problems, among those students with such problems very few were receiving treatment.

- According to their teachers, a substantial proportion (over 75 percent) of Title I students receive strong parental support for their educational efforts. Types of parental support provided included parent conferences with teachers, attendance at PTA meetings, and attendance at school activities.

- Nearly 80 percent of Title I students had attended pre-school.

- Among Title I students for whom SOS scores were available, results indicated that Title I students score at or slightly above the national norm on such positive characteristics as school affiliation, self-acceptance, and self-security.

- Generally Title I students scored below national norms on social maturity, although their scores on this characteristic tended to increase across grades.

- In general students whose SOS' indicated a high self-concept were also perceived by their teachers to exhibit such positive strengths as high self-concept, good peer relationships, positive attitude toward school, well-developed social skills, and a high level of self-confidence.

- Students who had repeated one or more grades generally were rated by teachers to exhibit lower levels of positive strengths than did nonrepeaters. This finding was consistent across grades as well as for both reading and mathematics laboratory students. Students with consistently lowest ratings on positive strengths were those who had repeated both the present and a past grade.

- Scale scores on the SOS for repeating and nonrepeating students did not vary significantly, although nonrepeaters tended to score slightly higher than repeaters. The exception to this pattern occurred for second and fourth graders on school affiliation with repeaters scoring slightly higher than nonrepeaters.

While these findings are substantially in agreement with those from previous evaluations, they do emphasize the continuing need of educationally deprived students for the specialized instructional and other services provided by the Title I program. Further, particular attention to the developmental needs of repeating students, particularly those who have repeated a grade more than once, appears to be warranted.

Evaluation of the Title I Program's Instructional Process and Support Components

Examination of the extent to which support was provided to the 1978-79 Title I program by program administrators, practitioners, pupil personnel team members, and parents comprised one phase of the 1978-79 evaluation. Data were collected through distribution of questionnaires to principals, classroom and laboratory teachers, pupil personnel and support staff, and parents involved in the Title I programs.

In each of the surveyed groups a majority of the respondents indicated that the 1978-79 program had been a success. As many of the principals noted, the program personnel were responsive to the special needs of the Title I students. An overwhelming number of respondents reported that the laboratory and kindergarten aide program had been very effective. In addition, a majority of the laboratory and classroom teachers and building support staff indicated that the staff development activities had assisted them in implementing the Title I program.

Though each of the groups played diverse roles in the implementation of the Title I program, in many instances they offered the same suggestions for improving the Title I program. Across all groups, the most frequent suggestion was that additional communication and cooperation be achieved among all levels of the Title I and school staff. In addition, respondents stressed the importance of the Title I program in providing an adequate supply of instructional materials and effective staff development activities. Comments and other recommendations made by each of the groups surveyed are summarized by group.

Principals and Teachers

In assessing the overall Title I program in 1978-79, a majority of the principals and laboratory and classroom teachers indicated that the program had been very effective. As evidence of this, respondents cited the students' improvement in reading and math skills which resulted from special program personnel and increased individualized instruction. Of the basic skills instruction programs, the laboratory program was rated as the most successful. In addition, the teachers noted that the kindergarten aide program had been extremely effective and recommended its expansion so that each kindergarten classroom could receive aide services.

Suggestions made by the principals and laboratory and classroom teachers dealt primarily with the actual instructional process. First, both principals and teachers cited the need for additional program personnel, especially educational aides. Laboratory and classroom teachers recommended a reduction in the size of their classes in order to provide more individualized instruction. Classroom teachers also expressed a need to spend more time in cooperative planning sessions with lab teachers, while lab teachers want additional time allotted for clerical work. Finally, classroom teachers expressed concern about the scheduling of students for lab and suggested that the schedule's flexibility be increased in order to insure that Title I students do not miss "prime time" instruction.

Building Support Staff[4]

The majority of the Building Support Staff indicated that the Title I instructional programs and instructional support services had been effective. Building Support Staff members especially were pleased with the staff

[4] Building Support Staff included program assistants, educational aides, and parent partner volunteers.

development program. Seventy-three percent of the respondents indicated that they had participated in staff development activities, and eighty-eight percent of that group reported that they had benefited from such activities.

In addition to the previously mentioned recommendations applying to the Title I program as a whole, Building Support Staff members offered a number of suggestions aimed specifically at improving their activities. One of the most frequently made suggestions was that each member's responsibilities be more clearly delineated. Furthermore, all members recommended an upgrading of their respective positions' status and salary. Finally, they emphasized the importance of a strong parental involvement component and suggested that the number of days the parent partners worked be expanded.

Pupil Personnel Team[5]

An overwhelming number of Pupil Personnel Team members rated their year with Title I students as effective. Approximately three-quarters of the Title I schools received pupil personnel services. The team members provided diagnostic testing and assessments; made referrals to various community agencies; held conferences with parents and school staff; and arranged for provision of eyeglasses, clothing, food and housing, and other social services.

Many of the suggestions made by the PPT members stemmed from problems they encountered in serving more than one school, the load ranging from one to eight schools per member. They stressed the need for adequate office space, with access to a telephone, at each school they served. Many of the members wished to see a reduction in the number of schools served by each team member. Finally, as mentioned previously, because of each team's multiple school load, the cooperation and trust of the school staff were mentioned as crucial to assure the effective delivery of Title I services.

[5] The Pupil Personnel Team included pupil personnel workers, pupil personnel aides, clinical psychologists, and psychiatric social workers.

Parental Involvement

When judged by the objectives established for program year 1978-79, the parental involvement component was a success in a majority of Title I schools. Over three-quarters of the schools both organized a Parent Advisory Council by October 31, 1978, and held regularly scheduled meetings by the end of May, 1979. Furthermore, most Title I schools received both parent volunteer and parent partner services. Though the number of parent partners did not reach 400 as planned, the level of parental participation in Title I programs was considerably higher than in the previous year.